

Elect

Allyson Buttram and Kerry Ring (Mentor), Choreography

Digital poetry choreography involves mending two visions and interpretations into one. This piece is inspired by Johannes Helden's digital poem, which is utilized as the backdrop of Allyson's choreography. Her choreography is athletic, specific, and emotionally driven. Allyson merged her own interpretation of the poem to the research she found on "Elect." The first thing she noticed was that her assigned digital poem was intriguing and beautiful, yet had an aspect that depicted a sense of overwhelming anxiety. The digital visual shows an immense tree with birds flying around and disappearing as new phrases appear on the screen. Since anxiety was a stated goal of Helden's, it was necessary to promote this feeling in her piece. Allyson drew out her dancers' authentic feelings through their individual artistry, so the audience would feel what they feel: anxiety. She tried to manipulate Helden's *cut-up technique* into her own choreography so she could integrate the meaning of the poem in the same fashion as he did. The technique of the poem is the most important aspect of the poem itself. Allyson interpreted the meaning of Helden's work as the process of creation. Mental processes of creation seemed to parallel the manipulation of the *cut-up technique*. Revealing different phrases in the wrong order takes the main dancer through stress of trying to put her ideas, which are the other dancers, into one cohesive creation. Visually, the tree represents the brain and main dancer while the birds represent the thoughts. The actual content of the poem is very dark. This adds to the anxiety from the *cut-up technique* because it makes it more difficult to put the pieces together as an audience member. Combining darkness, anxiety, mental processes, creation, and the *cut-up technique* is how Allyson mended Helden's vision with hers.